

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus that permits base stations to adaptively set initial power levels in forward link traffic channels (i.e., base station to mobile unit) based on an interference measure, where the interference measure is the difference
5 between the base station transmitted pilot E_C/I_O and the mobile unit received pilot E_C/I_O . The interference measure indicates how much interference is present from other base stations in the mobile unit's locale, mobile receiver noise and other similar sources. Call quality and system capacity are optimized since the initial power level is set in accordance with the interference environment. The method of
10 the invention implements the adaptive setting by extracting the mobile unit received pilot E_C/I_O from the access message transmitted by the mobile unit. The interference measure is then determined and used by the base station to set the initial power level in the forward link traffic channel.